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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

August 14, 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

I have read your recent report on actions to prepare our forces to meet a possible crisis in Germany and would like to congratulate you on getting these actions under way so rapidly.

I have a number of questions about the report which I would like to discuss with you. My own feeling is that we should hasten to Europe all the reinforcements needed to make the present garrison completely combat-ready and plan to leave these reinforcements in Europe indefinitely. At the same time, in the light of the world situation, we should proceed to raise our long-term readiness to include the capability of sending a six division force to Europe by January 1. To contribute to meeting these requirements, I would expect to use all the resources we have requested of the Congress.

I would, therefore, appreciate your views, when we meet, as to the maximum military strength that can be generated from the resources we have requested of the Congress. Specifically, I would like to review several alternatives for the use of the 37,000 Army spaces for which there are no approved plans. Is it not possible to get additional divisions from this strength?

I am greatly encouraged by the care with which you have designed the first phase of our military strength build-up related to Berlin and would hope you can suggest an equally careful application of the remaining resources to give us additional increases in strength in being on a broader basis. This action would, of course, have a direct relation to the development of our longer term posture to be reflected in the FY '63 budget which, I understand, you will be prepared to discuss toward the end of September.

Let us have our meeting early this week.

DISCUSSION
NW-54-112

SECRET